

March 8, 2016

Dear members of the Labor Committee,

My name is Megan Gomez and I am writing to you today to urge you to pass SB 221 and establish a paid family and medical leave program!

I have a six year old son, Emanuel, and a four year old daughter, Ciara, who live with me, my cousin and my grandmother. I work at two Dunkin Donuts locations in East Hartford and Windsor just to be able to bring home a decent paycheck. It is very draining mentally and physically to work at two different locations. I don't have a car so I have to take the bus, which means I get home very late and have to start my day very early.

To make matters even more difficult, my Grandmother was diagnosed with a neurological disorder. But even with the treatment and medication she receives, she regularly needs care. She sometimes has an extremely difficult time moving around the house and some days cannot get out of bed without assistance. My cousin had to move in with me to help me take care of her, and we also had to hire an aid to help us. Even with their help I still have to take a few days a month off to help care for her and take her to doctor's appointments.

This whole experience has been very difficult. I work two jobs and I can barely make ends meet. Taking unpaid days off is a burden on my family. If I did not have my cousin helping, I don't know what I would do.

When I heard about plans to create a paid family and medical leave program that would allow families like mine to take time off to take care of a loved one without also having to worry about how to make ends meet I knew I had to speak up. I am sure there are many other families going through the same kind of ordeal but aren't as lucky as I am to have a cousin that can move in to help out.

We are in a tough enough situation. Please pass a paid family and medical leave program so that I don't have to worry about making ends meet while I'm worrying about caring for my grandmother.

Thank you,

Megan Gomez  
Hartford